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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/938,595	08/27/2001	Maureen Teresa O'Connor	P63371US1	3685

136 7590 05/18/2006

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EXAMINER

RODRIGUEZ, JOSEPH C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3653

DATE MAILED: 05/18/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/938,595	Applicant(s) O'CONNOR ET AL.	
	Examiner Joseph C. Rodriguez	Art Unit 3653	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 August 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/147,674.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/27/01</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the oscillation means of claim 3 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

The specification is objected to for lacking the following section headings:

Brief Description of the Several Views of the Drawing(s): See MPEP § 608.01(f).

Detailed Description of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(g).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 5 recites the limitation "the axis of the non-linear oscillatory motion". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fasting (US 1,049,217).

Fasting (Fig. 2) teaches an apparatus for dry physical separation of particulate material, the apparatus comprising:

an inclined separating surface (a and g in series on base e, f) having upper and lower edges and arranged for limited movement relative to the base (Fig. 2),

oscillation means (out of balance flywheel o) for inducing non-linear, elliptical or eccentric oscillatory motion of the separating surface (p. 2, ln. 4 et seq.), and

introduction means (h) for introducing the particulate material onto the separating surface between the upper and lower edges. Here, the out of balance flywheel (o), hinge (l) and spring connection (m) is regarded as capable of producing a plurality of non-parallel linear motions, wherein one is at an angle to the axis of the non-linear oscillatory motion (p. 2, ln. 4 et seq. teaching that hinge l allows for the separating surface to be adjusted—thus claimed angles are anticipated). Further, a variable speed motor for driving the oscillation means is regarded as inherent. Here, the claimed method is inherent in the normal operation of the apparatus as cited above.

Claims 1, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Khag (SU 1,256,818).

Khag (Fig. 1) teaches an apparatus for dry physical separation of particulate material, the apparatus comprising:

an inclined separating surface (surfaces 1 on base 12 with springs 10) having upper and lower edges and arranged for limited movement relative to the base,

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oscillation means (13 connected to motor 14 through variator 15) for inducing oscillatory motion of the separating surface (Abstract), and

introduction means (19) for introducing the particulate material onto the separating surface between the upper and lower edges. Here, the claimed method is inherent in the normal operation of the apparatus as cited above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fasting in view of Satake (US 4,316,799) and Young (US 5,683,580).

Fasting as set forth above teaches all that is claimed. However, under an alternative interpretation the variable speed motor and the specific oscillation means may not be regarded as inherent. Satake, however, expressly teaches that providing a variable speed motor for an eccentric oscillator allows one better control of the flow of the materials to be sorted (col. 2, ln. 48-52; col. 3, ln. 48 et seq. teaching use of eccentric cam to produce oblique oscillation). Further, Young demonstrates that the use of vibratory separators with different oscillating motions is a well developed area within the screening arts by teaching that it is well known to provide a variety of elliptical

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motions in the vibratory separator arts to allow the operator to select a specific conveyance rate for the materials to be separated (col. 1, ln. 38 et seq. teaching the use of two rotating eccentric vibrators, best shown in fig. 9-12, to provide multi-directional and/or multi aspect elliptical patterns). Therefore, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to modify the invention of Fasting as taught above to allow for better control of the materials during sorting.

Conclusion

Any references not explicitly discussed above but made of record are considered relevant to the prosecution of the instant application.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **Joseph C Rodriguez** whose telephone number is **571-272-6942** (M-F, 9 am – 6 pm, EST).

The **Official** fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is **571-273-8300**.

The examiner's **UNOFFICIAL Personal fax number** is **571-273-6942**.

Further, information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system.

Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PMR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PMR only.

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For more information about the PAIR system, see

<http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>

Should you have questions on access to the Private PMR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at **866-217-9197** (Toll Free).

Alternatively, inquiries of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding can also be directed to the **Receptionist** whose telephone number is **571-272-6584** or to the Supervisory Examiner, Kathy Matecki, **571-272-6951**.

Signed by Examiner Joseph Rodriguez

jcr

May 4, 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JR' with a long, sweeping underline that extends towards the right margin of the page.